

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 9/9/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT { X } Consent { } Presentation { } Hearing (Time Est. ____) { } Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS { } Resolutions { } Contracts { } Ordinances { x } N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: { } 4/5 Vote Required { X } N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? N/A	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY { } N/A Date: <u>3/11/2014, 4/8/2014, 5/6/2014, 6/3/2014, 6/17/2014, 7/15/2014, 8/12/2014</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Guy Savage			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe/781-5011

DATE: 9/9/2014

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The last drought update was on August 12, 2014. This is the seventh update since the proclamation of a local emergency on March 11, 2014. This month's drought update is on the consent agenda as drought conditions remain unchanged and there were no major actions requiring further discussion that have occurred since the last update.

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. The task force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the Board on current drought conditions and related management actions. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency.

Current Conditions

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released August 26, 2014 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). Approximately 95% of California is at a level D-2 Severe Drought or worse. Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year including: Nacimiento 18% (68,425 acre feet); Lopez 47% (23,378 acre feet); Salinas 26% (6,286 acre feet); and Whale Rock 49% (19,161 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 3).

Monsoonal moisture has been present off and on in recent weeks, although the Central Coast did not receive measurable precipitation. Both southern and northern California received rain but these monsoonal conditions also resulted in a siege of large fires in northern California as a result of the lightning. Currently, the forecast remains dry for the Central Coast except for potential moist air from the remnants of Hurricane Marie.

Impacts

Drought impacts continue to evolve affecting different parts of the County in varying degrees. The latest Agricultural Producer Survey results indicate agricultural conditions continue to deteriorate due to lack of moisture. Although producers do not note changes in water availability in the past 30 days, for the first time, respondents noted yield losses associated with the drought. Growers are experiencing declining well levels and are also report increases in symptoms of salinity, with one respondent noting a measured increase in salinity levels in the root zone.

The County continues to receive calls from individuals who are experiencing problems with their domestic wells; however, determining how many wells have gone dry is proving to be challenging. State agencies are reporting this is a problem statewide, and is an issue illustrated through news and other reports in various areas. The Drought Task Force is considering various proposals to survey residents in order to gather countywide totals to inform and coordinate state assistance and response to mitigate drought impacts.

Due to drought conditions, above normal large fire potential will continue across the state into fall. Forecasts indicate the County of San Luis Obispo will have an above normal fire potential from July to October. Despite the County remaining dry, frequent low pressure weather systems and resulting cooler temperatures and higher relative humidity coupled with the absence of lightning and high wind events have helped moderate fire conditions. In order to reduce potential ignitions CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo continues to suspend all burning permits and open fires within the State Responsibility Areas and within the Local Responsibility Area under contract with CAL FIRE.

Negative economic impacts continue to mount due to drought conditions. In addition to economic impacts to agricultural producers, drought-related job losses are continuing to increase across the state. The State's Labor & Workforce Development Agency requested that all local workforce boards provide real time information on the workforce impacts of the drought. Though the San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board is hearing that there are impacts, the County does not have any "reportable" impacts due to the State's requirements for reporting (i.e. specific business name, address, etc.). Some growers responding to the Agricultural Producer Survey indicated that they have had to lay off employees and continued drought could potentially result in growers going out of business. The County, along with the Department of Social Services, continues to explore options for collecting drought impact data and increasing survey response numbers.

Conservation Efforts

County Facilities

General Services Agency continues to lead water conservation efforts at county facilities. To date, Facility Services has retrofitted 35 buildings with low-flow fixtures, saving an estimated 3,000 gallons per week. In addition, water efficiency measures for County facilities, parks, and golf were reviewed through PG&E's Sustainable Turnkey Solutions program. The site visit estimated a rough savings of 15 acre-feet by replacing fixtures and performing retrofits at County Operations Center facilities.

State Water Board: Mandatory Water Conservation

On July 29, 2014, an emergency regulation to increase conservation practices for all Californians went into effect. The new conservation regulation targets outdoor urban water use. With this regulation, all Californians are expected to stop: washing down driveways and sidewalks; watering of outdoor landscapes that cause excess runoff; using a hose to wash a motor vehicle, unless the hose is fitted with a shut-off nozzle, and using potable water in a fountain or decorative water feature, unless the water is recirculated. On August 19, 2014, in accordance with the drought emergency water conservation regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board, the Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance regulating outdoor water use to Mondays and Thursdays within the applicable County Service Areas (10A-Cayucos, 16-Shandon, 23-Santa Margarita, and 12-Avila Valley).

Emergency Actions

Cambria Community Services District (CSD)

As noted in the August 12 update, Cambria Community Services District (CSD) notified County Office of Emergency Services (OES) that a monitoring well had dropped below the three foot level in July. Due to permitting issues, once the well drops below the three foot level, the CSD is required to stop using a well downstream that is currently being used for community water supply. The CSD submitted a petition to the State Water Resources Control Board requesting a waiver to be allowed to drop the monitoring well level to two feet. County OES contacted Cal OES requesting assistance with getting the waiver request approved as soon as possible. County OES sent a request to Cal OES, which was sent up to

Cal OES headquarters. Cal OES in turn worked with two State agencies to help with expediting the request. A successful cooperative effort by all involved resulted in the issue of the emergency permit on August 21 by the State Water Resources Control Board. The emergency permit will help to ensure Cambria has a community water supply as it continues to work on development of its temporary Emergency Water Project.

As noted when the proclamation was made, the proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

Well dry impacts

Information regarding Drought Assistance for Rural Homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help improve the quality of life in rural communities throughout the nation. These programs may also help rural communities, businesses, and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. The USDA Drought Assistance Program packet is attached (Attachment 4).

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The report highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, General Services Agency (General Services), County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, and County Counsel. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of August 26, 2014, tracked labor costs associated with the drought total \$210,827.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force, confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Monthly Drought Update 9-9-2014
- Attachment 2: USDA Drought Monitor Map
- Attachment 3: SLO Reservoir Conditions
- Attachment 4: USDA Drought Assistance Programs